

Application No. 09/665,888

INXT 1021-2

In the claims:

This listing of claims, canceling claims 1-33 and adding new claims 34-42, will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Cancel claims 1-33.

34.(new) A computer implemented method for comparing a first document and a second document stored in a machine readable data storage medium or machine readable data storage media, wherein the first and second documents comprise respective documents defined using a markup language that defines characteristics of the documents used when rendering images of the documents, and wherein the markup language comprises block level markup tags, visual formatting markup tags, and sets of characters delineated by the markup tags, the sets of characters including tags and text characters, the method comprising:

    parsing, using a computer, the first document into a first plurality of groups of characters delineated by block level markup tags;

    parsing, using a computer, the second document into a second plurality of groups of characters delineated by block level markup tags;

    executing a routine using a computer to match groups in the first plurality of groups with corresponding groups in the second plurality of groups, to identify differences between said groups in the first plurality of groups and matching groups in the second plurality of groups;

    composing a difference document comprising a third plurality of groups that include identified differences, and including elements that identify the differences; and

    rendering an image of the difference document using a computer while preserving visual formatting of one of the first and second documents, with visual features denoting the identified differences.

35.(new) The method of claim 34, wherein said routine identifies new groups in the second plurality of groups; said difference document includes said new groups, and said image includes features denoting said new groups.

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36.(new) The method of claim 34, including normalizing the first and second documents by removing characters ignored during rendering and characters that define format information not relevant to said matching.

37.(new) The method of claim 34, including executing a routine using a computer, prior to said matching to identify differences, to remove characters that comprise intra-document links in the markup language, and to convert relative URLs to absolute URLs.

38. (new) The method of claim 34, wherein said markup language comprises an HTML standard markup language.

39. (new) The method of claim 34, including normalizing the first and second documents, by detecting a pre-formatting start tag and skipping the pre-formatted text contained between the start tag and a pre-formatting end tag.

40. (new) The method of claim 34, including normalizing the first and second documents, by removing header tags from the documents.

41. (new) The method of claim 34, including normalizing the first and second documents, by removing script references from the documents.

42. (new) The method of claim 34, including normalizing the first and second documents, by removing intra-document links from the documents.

43. (new) A computer system, comprising:

a data processor, including a data storage medium and an image output device, the data storage medium having computer programs executable by a data processor stored thereon, the computer programs including instructions for:

    parsing the first document into a first plurality of groups of characters delineated by block level markup tags;

    parsing the second document into a second plurality of groups of characters delineated by block level markup tags;

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matching groups in the first plurality of groups with corresponding groups in the second plurality of groups, to identify differences between said groups in the first plurality of groups and matching groups in the second plurality of groups;

composing a difference document comprising a third plurality of groups of characters groups that include identified differences, and including elements that identify the differences; and

rendering an image on the image output device of the difference document while preserving visual formatting of one of the first and second documents, with visual features denoting the identified differences.

44.(new) The computer system of claim 43, wherein said matching identifies new groups in the second plurality of groups, said difference document includes said new groups, and said image includes features denoting said new groups.

45.(new) The computer system of claim 43, wherein the computer programs include instructions for normalizing the first and second documents by removing characters ignored during rendering and characters that define format information not relevant to said matching.

46.(new) The computer system of claim 43, wherein the computer programs include instructions for removing prior to said matching to identify differences, to characters that comprise intra-document links in the markup language, and to convert relative URLs to absolute URLs.

47. (new) The computer system of claim 43, wherein said markup language comprises an HTML standard markup language.

48. (new) The computer system of claim 43, wherein the computer programs include instructions for normalizing the first and second documents, by detecting a pre-formatting start tag and skipping the pre-formatted text contained between the start tag and a pre-formatting end tag.

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49. (new) The computer system of claim 43, wherein the computer programs include instructions for normalizing the first and second documents, by removing header tags from the documents.

50. (new) The computer system of claim 43, wherein the computer programs include instructions for normalizing the first and second documents, by removing script references from the documents.

51. (new) The computer system of claim 43, wherein the computer programs include instructions for normalizing the first and second documents, by removing intra-document links from the documents.

52. (new) An article of manufacture, comprising a machine readable data storage medium having stored thereon computer programs executable by a data processor, the computer programs including instructions for:

parsing the first document into a first plurality of groups of characters delineated by block level markup tags;

parsing the second document into a second plurality of groups of characters delineated by block level markup tags;

matching groups in the first plurality of groups with corresponding groups in the second plurality of groups, to identify differences between said groups in the first plurality of groups and matching groups in the second plurality of groups;

composing a difference document comprising a third plurality of groups that include identified differences, and including elements denoting the differences; and

rendering an image of the difference document while preserving visual formatting of one of the first and second documents, with visual features denoting the identified differences.

53.(new) The article of claim 52, wherein said matching identifies new groups in the second plurality of groups, said difference document includes said new groups, and said image includes features denoting said new groups.

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54.(new) The article of claim 52, wherein the computer programs include instructions for normalizing the first and second documents by removing characters ignored during rendering and characters that define format information not relevant to said matching.

55.(new) The article of claim 52, wherein the computer programs include instructions for removing prior to said matching to identify differences, to characters that comprise intra-document links in the markup language, and to convert relative URLs to absolute URLs.

56. (new) The article of claim 52, wherein said markup language comprises an HTML standard markup language.

57. (new) The article of claim 52, wherein the computer programs include instructions for normalizing the first and second documents, by detecting a pre-formatting start tag and skipping the pre-formatted text contained between the start tag and a pre-formatting end tag.

58. (new) The article of claim 52, wherein the computer programs include instructions for normalizing the first and second documents, by removing header tags from the documents.

59. (new) The article of claim 52, wherein the computer programs include instructions for normalizing the first and second documents, by removing script references from the documents.

60. (new) The article of claim 52, wherein the computer programs include instructions for normalizing the first and second documents, by removing intra-document links from the documents.

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